



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 October 2024

by Alison Fish BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/W/23/3335703

High Thatch, Blandford Road, Corfe Mullen, Dorset BH21 3HJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant consent, agreement or approval to details required by a condition of a planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Steve Blake against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application dated 2 May 2023 sought approval of details pursuant to condition No 4 of a planning permission Ref 3/21/1296/HOU, granted on 22 March 2022.
 - The application was refused by letter dated 10 August 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Erect link between existing garage/store and main house. Installation of rooflights to an existing extension'.
 - The details for which approval is sought are: Prior to the installation of joinery, detailed drawings (at a scale of 1:5, 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate) showing the design, materials and construction specifications of all windows and doors shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall thereafter be completed in accordance with the approved details.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and the joinery details for windows and doors submitted pursuant to condition No 4 attached to planning permission Ref 3/21/1296/HOU granted on 22 March 2022 in accordance with the application dated 2 May 2023 and the plans submitted with it, are approved.

Preliminary Matters

2. The decision notice relating to the planning permission¹ ('the planning permission') includes reference to the installation of rooflights to an existing extension. However, I understand that this was removed from the proposal prior to the planning permission being granted. Accordingly, my consideration of this appeal relates to the joinery details for windows and doors but does not include rooflights.
3. I saw at my site visit that the proposed windows and doors, the subject of this appeal, had been installed.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect on the character and appearance of the appeal building and the Brog Street/Sleight Lane Corfe Mullen Conservation Area (CA).

¹ LPA Ref 3/21/1296/HOU Erect link between existing garage/store and main house. Installation of rooflights to an existing extension

Reasons

5. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. This is reflected in Policy HE1 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy (LP), adopted in 2014, which says heritage assets will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced for their historic significance.
6. I have also had regard to Paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which makes it clear that when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
7. The CA consists of a concentration of vernacular properties surrounded by countryside. The properties are well spaced with intervening hedges and trees reinforcing the rural character of the CA. The CA therefore gains significance from its traditional character in a rural setting.
8. The appeal property is set back from the highway in extensive gardens. An eighteenth century cob cottage, 'High Thatch' is faced in white painted brick with a thatched roof. The property is not listed but identified as a key individual building in the Brog Street/Sleight Lane Corfe Mullen Conservation Area appraisal² (CAA). I saw that it is largely the roof of the property which is visible from the wider CA. The property gains significance from its historic and architectural interest. The appeal property is therefore a non-designated heritage asset.
9. The CAA identifies that the property has been altered and extended but retains its cottage form and character. From the evidence before me, I understand that a single storey extension was added to the north east elevation in the early part of this century and a detached single storey garage was built in the 1990's to the south west of the cottage. This has subsequently been joined to the appeal property by a glazed link approved as part of the planning permission.
10. I acknowledge that in many cases the use of UPVC as opposed to timber can be harmful to the character and appearance of individual buildings and CA's. However, in this particular case, the UPVC windows and doors have been installed in the single storey elements of the building. These are modern additions to the thatch cottage. For this reason, their installation does not result in the loss of historic fabric. Their simple design does not detract from the character and appearance of the building as a vernacular thatched cottage. For the same reasons, I find that the effect of the windows and doors on the significance of the CA as a whole is a neutral one in this instance.
11. Accordingly, there would be no harm to the historic and architectural integrity of the non-designated heritage asset nor the character and appearance of the CA. In this instance the significance of the heritage assets would be preserved. As such, I find no conflict with Policy HE1 of the LP, the Act or the Framework.

Other Matters

12. The Council say that timber joinery is preferable to UPVC due to its longevity and environmental benefits. They have referred me to the Climate and

² Supplementary Planning Guidance No. 30 October 2007

Ecological Emergency Strategy. However, I have nothing before me to demonstrate how this is relevant to the proposal before me nor that the longevity and environmental harm caused by the UPVC windows in this appeal, would be so significant as to justify dismissing the appeal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

Alison Fish

INSPECTOR